

Legislature takes action against domestic violence

Violence against women is a serious problem in our state. Across the nation, a woman is beaten every 15 seconds. In a 1997 survey, more than 22 percent of women reported having been physically abused by a spouse or companion. The survey found that 53 percent of adults knew of a situation in which a woman was physically abused by her husband or boyfriend.

Women do not have to play the role of passive victim. They can fight back, but we must give them the proper tools. Earlier this year, the Legislature passed several bills that directly address issues of violence against women. They include:

- Establishing a registration system to help police and courts in Washington state enforce protection orders issued by courts of other states;
- Increasing penalties for stalking and for violating court orders in domestic violence cases;
- Requiring quality standards for court-ordered treatment of abusers; and
- Requiring Adult Protective Services to investigate suspected abuse of people who receive state-funded care, regardless of their age or disability.

Are you at risk?

You may be at risk for domestic violence if your partner is doing any of the following things:

- Checking up on you too much, such as listening to your phone calls or checking the mileage on your car.
- Putting you down, calling you names, frequently criticizing or humiliating you in public or private.
- Trying to control you, such as not allowing you to see friends or family, keeping you from going to school or work, or making you stay at home when you want to go out.
- Acting jealous or possessive and saying that is a sign of love.
- Destroying or threatening to destroy your belongings.
- Threatening to hurt you, your friends, family members or pets.
- Touching you in a way that hurts or scares you.
- Blaming you or others for everything and getting angry in a way that scares you.
- Saying your concerns and fears about your relationship are not real or not important.

No one has a right to hurt you. Domestic violence is a crime. If you are in an abusive relationship or know someone who is, get help. Here are several local phone numbers to call for assistance:

Eastside Domestic Violence Program	425-746-1940
Domestic Abuse Women's Network	425-662-1881
Domestic Violence Toll-free Hotline	1-800-562-6025
King County Domestic Violence Information Line	206-205-5555
King County Crisis Line	206-461-3222
Protection Order Advocacy Program	206-296-9547



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Women's Report 2000

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► **Did you know?**

Everett-Seattle-Bellevue ranks as second in the top 10 metropolitan areas across the nation with the greatest share of women-owned businesses — 41.3 percent.

Women's Report 2000


Dear Neighbor,

As we enter a new millennium, it's interesting to reflect on the progress of our nation and our state over the past 100 years, from technology to business and industry. On a more human level, the achievements of women over the past 100 years have been more than phenomenal.


Our society has progressed from women gaining the right to vote in 1920 to this year at the end of our century where a woman was a candidate for President. Today, there are more than 9.1 million women-owned businesses in the United States, accounting for 38 percent of all firms in the country, employing nearly 28 million people and generating more than \$3.6 trillion in sales. We can barely begin to imagine the promising future the next 100 years will hold as we close out the 20th century.

As we near the year 2000, I wanted to provide some information important to all of us, but especially women. We enter a new year faced with issues such as a health-care crisis in our state, concerns about our children's education, awareness of diseases not yet conquered, such as breast cancer, and much more.

I hope this information is useful to you. But even more importantly, I encourage you to contact me with any questions, concerns, comments or ideas about state government. I appreciate the opportunity to serve you!



Rep. Steve Van Luven
State Representative



Health-care choices, not government control

If you buy your own health insurance, you probably already know about the crisis in Washington’s individual health insurance market. You can no longer buy individual insurance in 31 of Washington’s 39 counties, including King County. Even the non-subsidized version of the state-run Basic Health Plan (BHP) is no longer accepting new enrollees. The BHP is very expensive and plagued by the same problems that affect the rest of the market.

To deal with the crisis, the state's high-risk pool was opened to all applicants. But there are several problems with the pool. It was originally intended for very sick people, not for the population at large. It’s also quite expensive. If you have children, you’d pay an additional \$167 per month, per child, with a \$500 deductible. That’s unaffordable for most people.

We are at a crossroads. We can either enact reforms that rejuvenate the private insurance market and offer people a variety of insurance choices at reasonable prices, or we can continue with our current policies until there are no private insurers left and government-run care is the only option.



There’s a lot to be said for developing a long-term patient relationship with your doctor, because he or she is much more familiar with your particular needs and can provide you with the best of professional medical care. Many women most frequently see their OB/GYN and consider that person to be their primary care provider. Under government care, a woman who has for many years seen the same obstetrician/gynecologist and has become accustomed to dealing with the person in very personal health matters may find that she is forced under government-operated health care to accept a different doctor. Remember, under government care, you lose your choices of doctors, services, and the amount you pay. **Government decides for you.**

I favor restoring consumer choice and giving consumers health insurance options. I will support legislation that puts you, not government, in control of your own health-care decisions.

Our children’s education —
Letting parents choose and teachers teach

I feel strongly about improving the quality of our schools so that our children get the best education and opportunity to succeed. I believe the key to successful education is to strengthen basic academics, encourage parents to become even more involved in their children’s education, enhance the role of teachers and local school boards, and provide the necessary tools and resources to get the job done. Here is some of what we provided in the budget to improve education for our children:

- Funding to reduce class sizes in lower grades
- Nearly \$20 million to help students at lower income levels and those scoring below average on national tests
- \$16 million to help improve reading skills in lower grades and \$2 million to begin a similar program for improving math skills
- Nearly \$18 million to help “property poor” school districts that are unable to generate needed revenues through local levies
- Significant pay raises for teachers, ranging from 8 percent to 15 percent, to help us attract and retain the most qualified professionals to teach our children
- \$7 million in grants to improve school safety

If you have ideas about how we can provide better public and private schools and a better education for our children, please call me. I’m interested in your comments and suggestions.



Rep. Steve Van Loven shares stories about the Legislature with children from St. Thomas Elementary School (Medina), during a tour of the state Capitol.

Breast cancer —
Take action now!



During the past year, there have been more than 3,300 diagnosed cases of breast cancer in Washington state with 800 related deaths. The American Cancer Society says early detection of breast cancer greatly improves the chances of successful treatment and survival. They recommend the following:

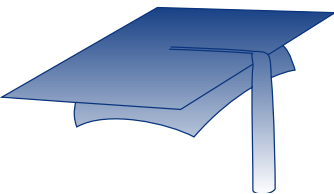
- Women aged 40 and older should have a screening mammogram every year.
- Between the ages of 20 and 39, women should have a clinical breast examination by a health professional every three years. After age 40, women should have a breast exam by a health professional every year.
- Women aged 20 or older should perform a breast self-examination every month. Look for changes such as development of a lump, swelling in the breast or underarm area, pain, irritation or redness. Most of the time, breast changes are not cancer, but it’s best to consult with your health-care provider if you notice any changes.

For more information, contact the American Cancer Society in Bellevue at (425) 869-5588.



Washington state has the highest percentage of women legislators in the nation - 40.8 percent.

“GET TUIT”
Helping you and your
children plan for college



No matter what grade your children are in, it’s never too early to plan for college. The rising cost of tuition has many parents concerned. There is good news, however. The Legislature has established a program that allows you to pay for tomorrow’s tuition at today’s prices. The Guaranteed Education Tuition (GET) program allows families to buy college credits at the current tuition rates for their children to use in the future whenever they are ready to attend college.

For more information on the GET program, call 1-877-GET-TUIT (toll free) or visit their website at www.get.wa.gov.

